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ABSTRACT

The study identifies and translates data relative to transfer students in the College of Agriculture at Texas A & M University that can serve for more effective counseling. The results of the study are summarized in 24 statements. Among conclusions based on data obtained from university records and from some of the transferring institutions and analyzed statistically are these: (1) students of lower academic ability tend to enroll in junior colleges and then transfer; (2) transferring institutions give adequate preparation; and (3) transfer students from small high schools perform better. Implications drawn from the study include three for counselors, who can recommend with confidence that students from small schools attend a junior or other senior college before transferring to the College of Agriculture; that they may transfer to any major curricular area; and that they should earn the maximum amount of transferable credit before moving. (AJ)

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A REPORT OF RESEARCH

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THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF TRANSFER STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Texas A&M University
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PREFACE

Today, transfer students constitute a large portion of the enrollment in the major colleges and universities of the nation. The percentage will, no doubt, increase in proportion to the development of junior college systems within states. Junior college students who wish to earn a baccalaureate degree must transfer to a four-year institution. It seems, therefore, that their welfare should be the joint concern of both junior and senior colleges.

This study was initiated because of the large number of transfer students enrolled in the College of Agriculture who had earned credit at junior or senior colleges. A need existed, it seemed, to determine if the working relationship between the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University and transferring institutions was such that students could transfer without being unduly penalized. Evidence available seemed to support the belief that students transferring to the College of Agriculture did well; however, it was believed that a study in depth would provide a true picture of the situation.

Dr. Autry was responsible for the major portion of the research. He is head of the Department of Agriculture at Tarleton State College at Stephenville, Texas. As a student, he transferred to Texas A&M University from a junior college at the baccalaureate level. His experience and empathy with transfer students, no doubt, endowed him with special qualifications for conducting the research.

Earl S. Webb, Professor
Agricultural Education
February, 1970

Purpose of the Study

This study evolved from recognition of the fact that transfer students comprise more than 50 percent of the enrollment in the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University and concomitant recognition that these students may present different problems than do natives. The purpose of this study was to identify and translate data relative to transfer students in the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University that would serve for effective counseling within the College of Agriculture, in transferring institutions, and in high schools. To this end, the following specific objectives were developed as guidelines for the research:

1. To relate scholastic aptitude to kinds of students (junior college transfer, senior college transfer, and natives), to curricular choices of transfer students, and to size of high school graduating classes of transfer students.

2. To compare the academic success of transfer and native students.

3. To determine the relationship of curricular choice, the number of hours of pre-transfer credit, the size of high school graduating classes, and scholastic aptitude to academic success of transfer students.

Definition of Terms

Terms used in this study are defined as follows:

Academic performance refers to scholastic achievement as measured by grade point ratio based on the three-point system (A = 3, B = 2, C = 1, D = 0, F = 0 grade points per credit hour).

Persistence means staying power. Those who graduated and those who were still enrolled in the fall of 1968 were considered persisters. Those who were dropped, who withdrew, or who transferred out of the University were considered non-persisters.

Academic success refers to a combination of performance and persistence.

Transfer student is one who enrolled initially in another college or university in the summer or fall of 1963, completed at least one semester of work, and then transferred to the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University. Also considered as transfers are those who enrolled initially at Texas A&M University, transferred elsewhere for at least 30 hours of work, and then returned to the University.

Natives are those who enrolled initially in the College of Agriculture in the summer or fall of 1963, received no more than 29 hours of credit elsewhere during their college career, and were still enrolled in the fall of 1965.

Scholastic aptitude is academic potential as measured by the total score of CEEB-SAT or ACT-Composite score converted to SAT equivalents.

Curricular areas refers to broad areas of study separated into the following groups:

1. Agricultural social studies--agricultural economics, sociology, agricultural journalism.
2. Agricultural education.
3. Agricultural engineering.
4. Animal sciences--animal science, dairy science, poultry science.
5. Soil and crop sciences--agronomy, floriculture, horticulture, plant and soil science.
6. Wildlife and range sciences--wildlife science, range science, entomology.

High school graduating class size refers to size groupings as coded by the Registrar's Office but modified as indicated below to place all sizes above 200 students into one category, Number V. This provided the following distribution:

Size Number	I	0 - 25 students
	II	26 - 50
	III	51 - 100
	IV	101 - 200
	V	201 - and more

Last four semesters of work refers to that taken immediately prior to graduation, withdrawal, or enrollment in the fall semester of 1968. For persisters, this work was composed of a minimum of 60 semester hours made up of long terms or any combination of long terms and summer terms that made a total of at least 60 hours. For non-persisters who did not complete as many as 60 hours prior to withdrawal, all work completed after September, 1965, was considered.

Transferring institution means the one from which students transferred. This institution may be a junior college, a four-year college, or another university.

Procedure

The transfer students selected as subjects for this study were all those who enrolled in another college or university in the summer or fall of 1963, completed at least one semester of work, and then transferred to the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University. Also included as transfers were those who enrolled initially at Texas A&M University, transferred elsewhere for at least 30 hours of work, and then returned to the University. The natives with whom transfer students were compared were those who enrolled initially in Texas A&M University in the summer or fall of 1963, received no more than 29 hours of credit elsewhere during their college careers, and were still enrolled in the College of Agriculture in the fall of 1965.

There were 134 natives in the study, and CEEB-SAT scores were available for all of them. There were 152 transfer students. Of these, scholastic aptitude scores were available for 111. Of the transfer students, 119 were from junior colleges and 33 were from senior college and universities. A total of 113 out of the 119 junior college transfers were from state public junior colleges, while three were from a private junior college in the state, and three were from out-of-state public junior colleges. Of the 33 senior college transfers, 26 were from state-supported colleges and universities in the state, four were from similar institutions outside the state, and three were from private institutions within the state. All students in the study were males. The subjects for the study were identified by examination of individual student files in the Office of the Associate Dean for Instruction in the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University.

The data necessary to accomplish the objectives of the investigation were obtained from (1) permanent records in the Office of the Registrar at Texas A&M University, (2) individual student files in the Office of the Associate Dean for Instruction in the College of Agriculture, and (3) from some of the transferring institutions. Data were analyzed by appropriate statistical treatments, the results of which served as bases for formulation of conclusions, implications and recommendations.

Summary of Analysis of Data

Results of this study are summarized as follows:

1. The mean scholastic aptitude score for natives was significantly higher than that of junior college transfers. Differences between mean scores for natives and for senior college transfers and between mean scores for the latter and for junior college transfers were not significant.

2. The range of scholastic aptitude scores was greater among both transfer groups than among natives.

3. Of the five curricular areas compared, the mean scholastic aptitude score was lowest among those students majoring in agricultural education. Differences among other areas were not significant.

4. The range of scholastic aptitude scores was least in agricultural education.

5. The mean scholastic aptitude score was significantly higher for those students from the largest high school graduating classes (over 200 students) than for those from intermediate size classes. It was not significantly higher than for students from the smallest classes (25 students and fewer).

6. The range of scholastic aptitude scores was greatest among students from the largest graduating classes.

7. There was no significant difference in the performance of junior college transfers, senior college transfers, and native students when

compared on the basis of all work taken at Texas A&M University.

8. Senior college transfers achieved significantly higher grade point ratios than native students when compared on the basis of all work taken at Texas A&M University and with adjustments for differences in scholastic aptitude. Differences between junior college transfers and natives and between junior college transfers and senior college transfers were not significant. The method, however, of making comparisons on the basis of all work taken at Texas A&M University is inherently favorable to transfer students.

9. There was no significant difference in the performance of junior college transfers, senior college transfers, and native students when compared on the basis of the last four semesters' work with or without adjustments for differences in scholastic aptitude.

10. The persistence of native students was not significantly different from that of all transfers as a group.

11. Persistence of natives was not significantly different from that of senior college transfers.

12. Persistence of junior college transfers was significantly lower than that of native students.

13. There was no significant difference between the performance of transfer students and natives when compared within the curricular areas of the College of Agriculture when adjustments for differences in scholastic aptitude were made.

14. There was no significant difference in the performance of transfer students when compared among curricular areas, either with or without adjustments for differences in scholastic aptitude.

15. Students who transferred with 60 hours or more of pre-transfer credit had a significantly higher mean grade point ratio than those who transferred with less credit when compared on the basis of all work taken at Texas A&M University and with adjustments for differences in scholastic aptitude.

16. There was no significant difference between the mean grade point ratio achieved by those who transferred with 60 hours and more of pre-transfer credit and those who transferred with less than 60 hours when compared on the basis of the last four semesters of work and with adjustments for differences in scholastic aptitude.

17. There was no significant difference in the performance of transfer students from high school graduating classes of different sizes.

18. Transfer students from smaller graduating classes (50 students and fewer) performed at a significantly higher level than those from larger schools (more than 50 students) when adjustments were made for differences in scholastic aptitude.

19. Persistence of transfer students was not significantly related to the number of hours of pre-transfer credit.

20. Persistence of transfer students was not significantly related to the size of their high school graduating classes.

21. The range of academic potential as measured by scholastic aptitude scores was not a significant factor in persistence of transfer students.

Conclusions

1. Students of lower scholastic aptitude as measured by SAT and ACT scores who plan to earn degrees in agriculture at Texas A&M University tend to enroll in junior colleges and then to transfer to the University.

2. Junior and senior colleges from which students transfer to the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University do an adequate job of preparing students academically for transfer.

3. Lack of persistence of junior college transfer students is attributable to undetermined factors.

4. There is an inverse relationship between performance of transfer students in the College of Agriculture and the size of their high school graduating classes when adjustments are made for differences in scholastic aptitude.

5. No curricular area in the College of Agriculture offers advantages to transfer students from the standpoint of performance as measured by grade point ratios.

6. From the standpoint of academic success in the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University, it is to the advantage of transfer students to enter the University with full junior classification rather than at some lower level.

Implications

1. If the present trend in junior college enrollment continues, the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University may choose in the future to focus upon upper level professional development.

2. There are factors related to small high schools that enhance performance of transfer students in the College of Agriculture.

3. Counselors can recommend with confidence that students from small schools attend a junior college or another senior college before transferring to the College of Agriculture.

4. Counselors can recommend with confidence that students in junior and senior colleges transfer to any major curricular area in the College of Agriculture that is appropriate to their interests and aptitudes.

5. Counselors should encourage students to remain in junior colleges or senior colleges to earn the maximum amount of transferable credit before moving to Texas A&M University to major in agriculture.

Recommendations

On the basis of this research the following recommendations are made:

1. That a program of continuing study of the scholastic aptitude and academic performance and persistence of transfer students in the College of Agriculture be initiated so that changes in ability and success patterns can be detected as they occur.

2. That special guidance services be provided for junior college transfers.

3. That research be initiated to determine the basis for the superiority of transfer students who graduated from small high schools and who are majoring in the College of Agriculture.

4. That research be initiated to determine why students choose certain curricular areas.